Within the community all women received about the same service. Though the poor felt the 20 to 30 baht cost[5] of a midwife was too expensive, and so utilized the free help of a compassionate kinsman (usually the mother) or neighbor, the latter sometimes were as expert manually as a midwife or even on their way to becoming one. The few critical cases, rich or poor, who were taken to the Minburi Health Center managed to pay the 60 to 70 baht fee (120 baht if penicillin were used).

General Attitudes Towards Having Children

In these farm families, children were an asset, for their help, skills, and earnings enriched the family. Boys and girls were equally desired. A girl did household chores and at her marriage brought in the considerable payment of "milk money." A boy could be ordained and so "bring merit" to his parents. Both could farm, and both would provide cherishing care to the parents in their old age, but this was expected particularly of daughters. A child usually arrived within a year or so of marriage, to the rejoicing of everyone. Until the birth of a child, marriage only partially changed the young couple's status, especially if they were still living under the parental roof. With children they became the heads of a family, with authority over, and responsibility for, a younger generation. In the few polygynous households, the position of a younger wife was enhanced when she bore a child. Sometimes on the birth of this or another child, the money paid to the bride's parents at the time of the wedding was turned over to the new mother. Title to some of the familial land, never given until a marriage had proved stable, might be conveyed to one spouse or the other. The arrival of a child was sometimes a signal for preparations for moving out and establishing an independent household, or for establishing a "second kitchen," i.e. two separate families living under a single roof. A study of the birth-rituals (Chap.V) gives evidence that the arrival of a child, especially the first, was of deep psychological and social significance to the parents. The marriage bonds were strengthened if the first-born were male (cf. p. 65). A couple without children was "sad" and "a little less rich." Barrenness was caused by lack of merit.

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5. Analysis of Janlakha's figures, borne out in observation, shows that per capita income was low, that there were many poor people, and because of the seasonal nature of income, even the rich were short of cash (1955:135-143). Ninety-two baht were the average "expenses for medicine" including delivery fees (1955:142).

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affection overrode kinship.[64] Thus affinal relatives and non-kin neighbors were also requested to assist. Buddhists attended Muslims and vice-versa, (though Muslim women preferred female assistance).

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In emergencies the professional midwives' area was the whole community. They travelled long distances to attend women who were not close kin. No parturient, however, even in an emergency, was ever attended by a complete stranger. In all likelihood, every adult in the community knew the midwives at least by sight.

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As to the size of the practices, reported activities ranged from the Muslim midwife's estimate of 10 per year, down to 2 or 3 per year.[65] The 2 men and the most competent female midwife reported about 4 per year, a figure probably weighted on the side of the difficult cases per year. It is noteworthy that the men, in spite of being as we shall see both mɔ̌ and midwife, did not have larger [462] practices than the women. It was considered basically a woman's skill.

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None of the midwives derived much income from their practices, nor did they expect it to be significant. Their main income came from rice-growing from which, however, the women and one of the males had largely retired because of age. The other male midwife was exceptionally busy as a labor contractor, builder of houses, land-owner, and headman as well. The midwives found the 5 to 30 baht offered

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64. Two teachers who were in the kinship category of granddaughter (lân) to the 3 best midwives, and lived only a few hundred yards from them, were delivered by a woman who was mother-in-law to one and husband's older sister to the other and who was "not a midwife but knows how." Since labor was quick and normal, no higher help was necessary. On the other hand, all 3 of these midwives turned up to help at the confinement of another cherished "granddaughter." Only one of them actually delivered the infant but other functions were diplomatically divided up by the young mother.

65. Hauck studied 46 babies, aged up to 3 and so not all born in one year. Thirty-one were delivered by 4 of the professional female midwives (12,8,7,3 respectively); a male midwife and an "experienced" person had done 2 each; 11 [R02] women, one each (Hauck, 1959:61). A few of the latter 11 [597] were ordinary kin, not midwives.

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in the khwan khăo "gift" handy cash. The income was about 40 to 200 baht ($2.00 to $20.00) per year.

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The duties of a midwife were not time consuming if all went well. There was practically no pre-natal care, and a few hours of care was given for only three days after birth. If complications arose, though, the midwife spent long hours away from home. In fact the husband of one midwife grumbled, "You don't receive anything, and just waste time. Sometimes you stay away over night, and no one watches the house or the children."

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In their social role, midwives felt personal but not group solidarity. A solid bond existed between an older midwife and the particular younger one to whom he or she had given training and magic. Those related by blood or marriage sometimes worked together, and even turned over cases to each other if outside demands became pre-eminent. If in trouble on a case, midwives did not call on each other unless as close, affectionate relatives but turned rather for help from a mŏ or to the Mĭnburī Health Center. Yet sometimes rivalry was severe. If the family of the parturient felt that no progress was being made with one midwife, they called in another and another. Each did his utmost and then stepped down when it had to be admitted, "My magic is not enough." The final expert who brought mother and baby through before the deposed midwives glowed inwardly with pride and skill and satisfaction that the magic of his particular teacher had proved effective. The sharpness of the competition reverberated through the words, "I pushed the other midwives down." Community standing or "face" was not lost by an unsuccessful case because of the midwives' fundamental role as helpers only, their faith in their own experiences, and again, the conviction that the course of childbirth was merit-determined.

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Though living like other elder citizens of the community, in their social role they were more respected. Known as selfless donors of time and energy for the sake of others, whose successes gave proof of merit and nurturing capacity, they were viewed as assets to the community. In spite of competition considerable affection was evident between some. They were elders before a sea of youth, old friends who had for years lived and farmed side by side, met at ceremonies, and shared many experiences.

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If the case were in difficulty sometimes a mŏ was called, sometimes a midwife or even both. What was the nature of their respective specialties? What in fact made certain midwives "professionals" (thaw ĕchĭp [Mc.F. 990]) when others who had equal or more experience were not so considered?

759 Although as to fees, they said, "It is as you please," these
• [465] women received as a rule the higher honoraria of 10, 20, and
30 baht. They did not have a separate teacher-rite but paid
their respects during regular temple events, such as offer-
ing a pig's head and the other items during someone's ordi-
[212] nation, though the Muslim midwife had her modified teacher-
[214] rite in a separate home ceremony, not at the mosque (cf.
Appendix:Muslim Customs). It was even said of the best fe-
male midwife that "she had a book." She was literate in
Thai. Even if her book were a popular astrological guide,
it carried the reverence accorded all books. Whatever it
[789] was, its possession increased her aura of reliability.
Though the women did not receive their magic at the temple
but rather from a kinsman in the maternal line, their incan-
tations, which appeared to be in the Pali-Thai tradition,
were no less effective.

759 The professional midwives, both men and women, saw
themselves as individual custodians of sacred knowledge and
competent in a technique. They were not only interested and
ready, but obliged to give expert care to anyone, anywhere
it was needed.

The non-professional midwives always thought of them-
selves as voluntary helpers of kinsmen, acting "out of pity,"
and carrying on the female responsibility for new life as
[562] older women helping their younger relatives. The idea of
giving nurture and assistance was so deeply ingrained in the
female office that the professional midwives saw themselves
fundamentally as volunteers.

Learning Midwifery

The decision to deliver a daughter or a wife was not
momentous. One did not have to be "suk" to deliver a baby.
The same practical and compassionate motives that led a
mother or husband to do this led some of these people to
seek out professional techniques so that they might "help
more." One woman, bearing her own child at 25 with intense
suffering, became angry (Thep Thai) because "the midwife did
nothing to help, but just sat and chewed betel while others
did all the work." In desperation she called in her own
mother to deliver her. She also "felt she had many rela-
tives who would need her help." Another was asked by her
mother's brother, a midwife, to accompany him as he was get-
ting too old. He then gave her his magic. A man took up
the specialty after his first child, a son, died at birth
from ineptness, he thought, of the midwife. Another man,
though, took it up as a "minor extra" to his career as a [illegible].
All learned the [illegible] by accompanying and helping an

fishing and selling vegetables, they managed to obtain a fair diet. The father's skill as a masseur was valued especially at periods of heavy farm work, after childbirth, and by the cooks at a ceremonial feast. This brought in from 2 to 12 baht per week.

In Group A, Families 67 and 103 were at the most difficult period of life, with young, dependent children, and housing, land and equipment to be acquired. By great industry, including egg production from a flock of 60 chickens, and by severe "belt-tightening," Household 103 was lifting itself into a propertied position. The parents in Household 67 were shy. One or the other of the two older children often stayed home from school to look after the baby, so that both parents could work. Husband and wife in Household 12 were both very shy, the only ones in the survey group who were at all reluctant to participate. They seemed ashamed of limited food. The wife was frequently ill. In Household 222, the 14-year old daughter often gathered and sold vegetables at Minburi before school in the morning. She might have full charge of the younger children for days at a time. A daughter who worked as a servant in Bangkok contributed 50 baht per month to this household. In Household 215, the activities of the wife as medium were predominant. Pay included food, often cooked, and the free use of 3½ rai of land, as well as cash. Maintenance of a son in school in Bangkok cost about 1000 baht per year plus 60 tang of rice. In Household 2, the elderly wife's services as "boss-buyer and cook" at ceremonials, and as marriage go-between did not bring in cash, but gifts, clothing and much participation in feasts.

All families in the survey group were Thai Buddhists, and 6 of them offered food to priests more or less regularly. On 17 of the 24 survey days when the observer visited these households, food was offered. Two of the 5 families that did not customarily give food to priests, did so on one and two survey days, respectively. In one case food was offered to a son who had been recently ordained. Rice was always included in the food offered, and in 3 of the 20 instances observed rice only was given. The weight of cooked rice given by one family in one day ranged from 185 to 1210 grams, with an average of about 600 grams. In 16 instances, some cooked food such as fish or vegetable curry was given with the rice; in one instance fresh pineapple was given.

Cash Expenditures for Food. - Mean total, and per capita daily cash expenditures for food for survey days, are shown, by household in Table 3. (See Table 2, p. 23 for division of food expenditures for Groups A,B) Although cash expenditures for food varied considerably, the amounts in all cases were small, and approximated figures obtained by Janlekha (1955) for 106 households. Larger consumption of animal products, which were the most expensive items purchased,

511 appeared to account in large part for the greater cash expenditures of some families than others. Thus Household 25, with the highest total and per capita cash expenditure for food among these 11 families, consumed a larger quantity of meat than others, and often bought beef, which was the most expensive item purchased. This household bought fruit, meat, and vegetables from venders almost every day. They said "Some do not pay money to buy food, but pick or get it from the canal or gardens --this family cannot live like that because they come from a rich family and cannot live on poor food, so most of the money goes for food." The husband said "I cannot work on poor food." In Group A, Household 12, which had the highest per capita food expenditure, had little home produced food. The wife, who went to Bangkok often, usually bought food when in town. Household 2, with a total cash expenditure for food higher than others, did not have pork or beef on survey days, but ate more (1)plaa (1)thuu, a sea fish which is purchased.

433 511 Home Production of Food. - In keeping with the general pattern in the community, the families surveyed produced most of their own food.

243 244 256 262 Rice. - The hired laborer received rice as part of his pay, but all other families produced their own. Seven households used polished rice exclusively (Table 9). The only one to use home pounded rice in major part was Household 103. This family lived near a little canal which was dry in summer, so they were using home pounded rice when visited toward the end of March and in mid-July (Rounds IV and I). When the observer came in January (Round III), transportation of rice to the mill by boat was possible, but the family members had little farm work to do and were willing to spend some time milling rice. This family, which lived in the home-milling area (see p. 40), took rice to be milled only during the harvest season when they were busy, and the level of the canal was still high. The families which used home pounded rice in minor part did not live in the home-milling area, and apparently milled rice at home only when they were unable to get to the mill by boat.

244 254 Fruits and vegetables. - Although the Thai government has attempted to encourage kitchen gardening, few vegetables and fruits were produced by the families which cooperated in the dietary study (Table 10). All families grew bananas, and certain common ingredients of curries: chilies, bergamot, galangal and lemongrass. No other plants were grown by as many as half of the families studied.

222 262 Of the edible plants which grew wild, swamp cabbage was used by 7 families on 11 of the 44 survey days. Bamboo shoots, the white flowers of the West Indian pea tree and yellow (2)sa-(5)noo flowers were used by 3 families on one day each;

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landlord-operators were more sensitive to the change in rent rates than were the other groups of farm operators.

Limited opportunity for an alternative occupation was mentioned in the preceding paragraph as one of the factors contributing to the inelastic nature of demand for working land. It was also mentioned in the section on the occupational structure of Bangchan that farm laboring families as existing in the village were indigenous and were an outgrowth of competition for land coupled with the reluctance to emigrate on the part of those who failed to rent in any land. Limited opportunity for an alternative occupation in the village was also suggested in the same section when it was mentioned that the only possible alternative -- petty trading which was actually taken up by some former farm operators -- was limited by the fact that villagers bypassed local traders and went to the nearby market town of Sinburi for major purchases and variety goods.

Limited opportunity for an alternative occupation outside the village, however, needs elaboration. It cannot be denied that wages in Bangkok, only twenty miles away and easily accessible through good road and bus services, were higher on the average than corresponding returns for labor in the village. It is important to note, however, that what will attract a villager to seek a job in Bangkok is not a higher average wage level in the city but a higher marginal wage there. Regarding the marginal wage, it is highly doubtful that a better condition exists in Bangkok.

243 household. Although labor earnings is a truer measure of
434 a farmer's return, it is less widely used than labor income because no such estimation is involved in this latter measure and because prequisites are much less important in the United States. On Thai rice farms, however, it is not as difficult to estimate the value of farm products used in the household because generally only one kind of farm product -- rice -- is involved and the consumption of rice, although in large amount, can be precisely determined. To a much lesser extent poultry products may be used, but it is also fairly easy to estimate.

583 In theory, the remuneration for family workers'
465 effort is imputed at the going wage rate on their actual contribution in the farm work, when labor earning is calculated. In practice, however, Bangchan family workers receive in addition to board and lodging a certain amount of cash from their family head who is also the farm operator and who pays this amount from farm net cash return. The amount an individual family worker receives varies according to individual need and often to the whim of the family head. To be sure, there is no such thing as a fixed allowance because yearly fluctuation of farm income does not permit
593 such arrangement. One Bangchan farmer put it this way,
434 "Hired labor is usually more expensive than family labor
465 except in good years, for you can't help giving generous gifts to the family in a good year. This year (1949, the year following a bumper 1948-49 crop) I gave my two daughters

434 300 baht for clothing, 500 baht which they spent mostly
• 465 on a pilgrimage to the Temple of Buddha's Footprint, and
593 670 baht for two gold necklaces. That's a total of 1470 baht for the two of them. My wife alone took 1,100 baht received from the sale of the early variety, and I don't want to take the trouble to ask where the money went."

It has been observed that farm income varies greatly from farm to farm as well as from year to year. Farm household expense, on the other hand, has been observed to be less variable. Although the remunerations for farm operators and family workers are directly related to farm income, it would seem unwise to discuss farm income without bringing in first the discussion on farm technology and farm organization and management. We propose, therefore, to limit at the time being our discussion of the remunerations of farm operators and family workers to indicating their respective sources only. We shall have occasion to deal with their patterns and magnitudes in Chapter VII, which will be exclusively devoted to income and consumption of farm operators.

465 The hired laborer receives his remuneration for the
178 farm work in the form of annual wage which is paid by his employer, the farm operator, according to the provision of the oral contract made before each working season. It was found in 1948 that this annual wage was paid in either cash or kind, and in addition the laborer received free board and lodging and one or two working suits. Of 13 hired laborers covered by the 1948 survey, five were paid a cash wage

TABLE 33

ANNUAL WAGES OF HIRED LABORERS IN BANGCHAN AND ITS IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORHOOD
Thailand, 1949-53

Year	Type of Wages*	Number of Laborers Reporting	Total Wage	Range	Average
1949	Cash wage	2	1600 baht	600-1000 bt	800 bt
	Kind, fixed	3	300 tang	100-100 tg	100 tg
	Kind, variable	2	9 rai	4-5 rai	4.5 rai
1950	Cash wage	4	3350 baht	400-1350 bt	838 bt
	Kind, fixed	7	600 tang	60-100 tg	86 tg
	Kind, variable	3	12 rai	3-5 rai	4.0 rai
1951	Cash wage	6	4400 baht	300-1200 bt	733 bt
	Kind, fixed	8	660 tang	50-110 tg	83 tg
	Kind, variable	3	12 rai	3-5 rai	4.0 rai
1952	Cash wage	10	8400 baht	600-1300 bt	840 bt
	Kind, fixed	7	630 tang	50-120 tg	90 tg
	Kind, variable	3	13 rai	3-5 rai	4.3 rai
1953	Cash wage	14	12000 baht	250-1150 bt	857 bt
	Kind, fixed	2	250 tang	100-150 tg	125 tg
	Kind, variable	2	6 rai	3-3 rai	3 rai

*Cash wage -- wage was paid in cash.
Kind, fixed -- wage was paid in fixed amount of paddy agreed upon at the beginning of the season.
Kind, variable -- wage was paid in paddy harvested from a specified area agreed upon at the beginning of the season.
In all these cases, laborers received in addition free board and lodging and two working suits, one at the beginning of the period of breaking the soil and another at the beginning of the harvesting season.

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of the number of hired laborers represent only the case study of hired laborers who were located in 1953 and were interviewed on their past records. Statistically, therefore, it would be misleading to infer the actual employment of hired laborers in each year from those figures. Second, since the same population of hired laborers was used throughout, the effect of increasing age on individual wages must be considered. This does not mean, however, that there was a tendency for the average wage in our sample to rise with the years in relation to the standard wage; because not all of the 34 hired laborers started to work in the same year, rather some started before 1949, some started in 1949, and a good many started in each of the following year. There was also the effect of the generosity of the employer which is to be considered in relation to the wage level.

It would appear, nevertheless, that employment of hired laborers in any specified year can be measured by actual counting or simple random study done in each specified year. Although this is possible now that we have fairly well established our universe, there is still the problem of the hired laborers quitting their jobs before the end of the rice season which had occurred not infrequently. The problem of varying wage rates due to working ability of the laborer on the one hand and to the scrupulousness of the employer on the other may, however, be partially solved by using the maximum wage of each year as the basis for generalization. It is with such cautions that the figures as presented in Table 33 might

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• 465 be of any help in the understanding of the hired laborer situation in Bangchan.

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46 Let us now turn to the last group of farm laborers -- the piece-workers. These laborers receive their renunerations in the form of cash paid at the completion of each job contracted. Four types of farm work were observed to have involved the utilization of piece-workers -- uprooting of rice seedlings, transplanting, harvesting, and digging earth and mounding. Uprooting, the heaviest of all rice growing steps because seedlings must be pulled up in budle and smashed against the shank of the worker, was limited to adult male workers. Transplanting, on the other hand, was the lightest of all these steps involving the itlization of piece-workers and may be done by all kinds of workers including the young. Harvesting and digging and mounding are too heavy for the young but not for the adult female workers to participate, so they are usually performed by adult workers of both sexes.

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[435] It was found in the cost of production study in 1948 that 104 farm operators in Bangchan spent a total of 4,434 baht on uprooting done by piece-workers, 7,931 baht on transplanting, and 13,310 baht on harvesting, or an average per farm of 43 baht for uprooting, 76 baht for transplanting, and 128 baht for harvesting. Although digging and mounding is generally considered a part of farm work since it is done primarily in order to keep the buffalo shed above the water level as well as to improve the home garden; it is not

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463 we finally settled on an arbitrary definition: a profes-
464 sional piece-worker was one who was ready most of the time to be called upon to perform piecework. This automatically eliminated the school children who were able to work only during the school recesses, the poor aged people who had to make a living in one form or another but who were able to perform only the lightest kind of piecework -- transplanting, and members of the well-to-do families who did some piecework for a small amount of pocket money only.

Adopting this arbitrary operational devinition, it may be assumed that professional pieceworkers include all members of the laboring families, small farm operating families, and other families of various occupations not financially well off, who are old enough yetnot too old to work and who are not currently engaged in some other kinds of work.

178 463 465 Table 34 shows work records of the 34 farm laborers earlier mentioned. It is seen that of these 34 laborers, only six had remained hired laborers throughout the periods of their farm work. These were Laborers 8, 9, 11, 22, 27, and 28. The other laborers were observed to have assumed various other statutes in the course of the five-year period from 1949 to 1953, namely, farm operator, pieceworker, family worker, and transient family worker. When these laborers were interviewed, they also gave estimates of their earnings from pieceworking as far as they could remember. In 1949, for example, piecework earning figures were available from

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465 two laborers -- 1,000 baht for Laborer 7 and 500 baht for Laborer 30, avereging 950 baht for the year. In 1950, earnings of 500, 850, and 1,000 baht were reported respectively by Laborers 18, 19, and 29, avereging 703 baht for the year. In 1951, only one case of 600 baht earning was reported by Laborer 5. In 1952, earnings of 600, 1,000, 1,000, 1,000, and 320 baht were reported respectively by Laborers 5, 14, 29, 30, and 32, avereging 790 baht for the year. In 1953, earnings of 2,000, 600, 1,000, and 300 baht were reported respectively by Laborers 4, 5, 14, and 19, avereging 975 baht for the year.[4]

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464 In the preceding paragraph, the term "transient family worker" was introduced. This refers to a person distantly or not at all related to the family in question who has been accepted as a family member with a dual status of half relative and half laborer. Since there is actually no genuine family tie, such member has been observed to come in and go out of the family rather freely as the occasion [465] may arise, and hence the term "transient". While staying with the family, the transient member is expected to participate in the family work that is appropriate to him in exchange for good, shelter, clothing, and occasional monetary gifts.

In 1948, we came across a case where an old man of 80 was living with one of the seven headmen of Bangchan as

4. Table 53 gives an idea of the meaning in real terms of these incomes.

592 a transient member of the family. This was rather unusual,
464 however. The pattern was that a transient member was
[561] accepted when he is rather young. If he was quite mature,
he might also be accepted; but the expressed motive of the
592 accepting family would then be somewhat different. When
• 465 approached by a mature prospective transient member, the
464 family head would most probably say that he could not afford
to keep a hired laborer but he would be glad to let the man
or woman stay with him as a member of the family, and that
they might as well "share in the food, and share in the work".

It has been observed that transient family workers received much less from the family than the standard wage
[435] of hired laborers. While the latter received an annual wage of 1,000 baht or the crop from 5 rai, the former might be given only 50 or 100 baht a year. To farm operators of moderate or large rice farms, transient family workers were certainly an economic advantage. It was quite natural that these operators would try to keep them in the family as long as possible. Among the several methods observed were the following: (1) adoption; (2) promise to sponsor ordination of the young male transient member; and (3) giving a certain amount of lampai.

592 It was mentioned in the section on the family in
464 Chapter II that adoption as practiced in Bangchan did not
[597] involve legal registration of the adopted child, and that
[792] maltreatment of adopted children was not infrequent. To sponsor an ordination was in fact not quite as expensive

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*243 178 463 [311] become investors, traders, and public servant. In 1948, these eight families were operating farms of a combined area of 286 rai, ranging from 20 rai to 80 rai, averaging 36 rai per farm. Seven of these eight families owned rice fields totalling 201 rai, ranging from 5 rai to 80 rai, averaging 29 rai per family owning land. Evidently, it may be said that these seven families deliberately had given up farming in favor of new occupations from which they expected higher remunerations. As for the one family owning no land, the same generalization still holds. This family was operating a 22-rai farm in 1948, a farm of optimum size which could be expected to yield a higher income than any of those operated by the thirteen former operators who had turned farm laborers. The head of this family, nevertheless, got a permanent job in the Bangkok Harbor, a government owned concern, with a salary of more than 7,000 baht annually which is much higher than his former net income from operating a rented farm. [464] [465]

A case has thus been built for the relative unattractiveness of farm operating occupation among a certain sector of farm operators who had shifted to other occupations. This was responsible for the decline of farm operating occupation from 80 per cent of the occupational structure of the village in 1949 to 72 per cent in 1953 (Table 11). If it had not been for the 14 new families branching out from existing families who had taken up farming during the period between 1949 and 1953, the decline would have been more abrupt.

*243 476 a "ngarn" (lit., work), which is one hundred bundles of seedlings uprooted in case of uprooting, one-fourth of a rai transplanted in case of transplanting, and also one-fourth of a rai harvested in case of harvesting.

The author followed closely every cooperative uprooting which Chom participated. It was found that this operator had bilateral obligations with 20 other members who during the 1953 season had uprooted for him a total of 41 units or 4,100 bundles of seedlings -- 1,400 bundles on July 22, 1,100 bundles on August 3, and 1,600 bundles on August 15. Chom had to make good the reciprocal work of this same amount for all his guest workers according to their individual shares of contribution to him. At the end the records show, however, that Chom himself had contributed only 28 units or had uprooted only 2,800 bundles for fellow members. Although his son Phuan had contributed six more units, the family was still short of seven units. As it actually happened, Chom was away from the village on a house building work in Dhonburi from August 18 to 25. Dkring this period of eight days he was supposed to participate in seven cooperative uprootings. His only substitute, Phuan, could not do the work for him for Phuan was also tied up in cooperative transplanting. Chom therefore arranged for [464] [465] a professional piece-worker to do the seven cooperative uprootings he was committed to at the going rate of 13 baht per 100 bundles uprooted.

Records show that at the end Chom's contribution to each of his twenty fellow members was individually equal to the

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243 476 464 cooperative uprooting were exceptionally good workers, and this was the reason why they were approached when help was needed. These men accumulated work credits and utilized them when they were contracted by operators who had not enough family labor to uproot their seedlings. Chom, for example, after utilizing his own family labor as well as all the work credits he earned in cooperative uprooting, still was in short of labor to uproot his latest varieites on August 22 in which ten units of work were needed for the estimated 1,000 bundles [465] to be uprooted. He, therefore, contracted Sa, a fellow member, to do the job for 130 baht. On that date, Sa called upon ten members including himself to uproot Chom's seedlings in his name. So the same old faces appeared on Chom's farm. Outwardly, this looked like an ordinary cooperative uprooting on the mutual help basis. In reality, however, it was a business deal out of which Sa received cash payment from Chom who in turn received labor. Our records show that Sa had another earlier contract to uproot 1,700 bundles for another operator, and the same method of recruiting labor among fellow cooperative members was used. Since our records show only cooperative uprootings conducted among this group of twenty-four members, it was possible that Sa might have a few more contracts which did not appear in the records.

Ordinarily, farmers do not like to be obligated to professional piece-workers, for they might later be asked to work in return for somebody they do not like. In fact, there was some talk in 1953 among farm operating members on the

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
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243 476 464 possible ways to eliminate the participation of professional piece-workers. From the standpoint of professional piece-workers, however, to get oneself admitted into a cooperative group is a boon to their respective families for job opportunity [465] would be assured to them. This is the reason why Sa was able to earn 2,000 baht in 1953 while most of his fellow piece-workers' earnings were as low as 300 or 600 baht.

243 476 The same principle of labor reciprocity held in the other kinds of cooperative work, which also involved cash payment in the end to professional piece-workers who served as clearing agents to settle the balances of work credits. Generally speaking, such balances were more in case of cooperative transplanting than cooperative uprooting, and the same were even higher in the case of cooperative harvesting. This was to be expected because transplanting involved about double the amount of labor spent on uprooting, and harvesting alone required about a tenth more than the combined labor requirement of these two operations.

243 461 476 Chart 1 shows both man-labor spent by Chom farm staffs and man-labor spent on Chom Farm, the former being represented by the solid line and the latter by the dotted line. On the basis of equal reciprocity of labor, these two should be technically equal in total magnitude. They differed, however, in their daily distribution. It is seen that the two lines coincide during the periods from June 4 to July 14, from September 30 to December 3, and from January 26 to February 4, when there was no cooperative activity. During the periods from July 15

243 426 432 Differentiation in paddy prices is limited to cases where farmers have received in advance the payment for paddy to be delivered at harvesting time. This is a common practice which is called in Thai "tog khao" (lit., fall rice). Usually, the advance price received by the farmer is about half or not more than three-fifths of what he would normally receive. Considering that cash is usually received about a month or two before the delivery of the paddy, it would seem that tog khao is a kind of loan with as high a rate of interest as from 25 to 50 per cent per month.

243 426 465 A similar practice is adopted with respect to advanced payment for piecework, where pieceworkers are committed to uproot, transplant, or harvest at about half of the prevailing rates. This is called tog raeng (lit., fall labor).

243 128 427 Tables 24 and 25, in the section on land tenure of Chapter III, show a wide range of rental rates of rice lands which have not demonstrated any marked difference in crop producing ability.

Rates of interest in Bangchan vary greatly from 0 to 10 per cent per month. This topic will be discussed more fully in later sections of this chapter.

243 434 556 The important point that should be observed in connection with these differentials in paddy prices, rates of interest, rentals, and wage is that it is the less affluent farmers who usually bear the burden of higher costs due to these practices. Thus, these differentiations serve only to widen the gap between poor and well-to-do farmers.

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made that any program of fish raising in a closed pond, no matter how effective it may be, should not preclude the need for conservation of fish naturally existing in the open canals.

It has been pointed out that Bangchan operators produce 52 per cent of the things they need for ordinary consumption. Thus, rice growing may be seen as a farming-to-reduce-cost enterprise where maximization of profit ceases to be the primary motive of production. It has been pointed out also that rice growing is a losing concern to many operators (in terms of labor income and operator's labor earnings), but the loss has been compensated by the privilege to fish which is open to all village residents. Since the amount of fish caught constitutes the main and probably the only source of protein intake and at the same time a considerable share in the diet of villagers, continually decreasing supply of fish therefore underscores the immediate need for an effective program for fish conservation as a means to prevent the standard of living of the villagers from falling below the minimum level of subsistence.

Over-population in an area of limited job opportunities naturally creates an over supply of labor, which in turn results in low wages. This is further complicated by a wide variation of individual earning from labor of from two thousand baht annually to almost nothing, the latter being the case of transient members of farm operating families.